



Steve Cohn
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OFFICE OF THE
CITY COUNCIL

CITY OF SACRAMENTO
CALIFORNIA

STEVE COHN

COUNCILMEMBER
DISTRICT THREE

September 23, 2010

Mary Nichols, Chair
California Air Resources Board
1001 "I" Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Support staff proposed regional greenhouse gas targets for SB 375

Dear Chair Nichols and California Air Resources Board Members:

Thank you for your efforts to implement SB 375, California's Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act. If implemented properly, SB 375 will result in communities that are more sustainable, more prosperous, and healthier. It will also ensure cleaner air; cleaner water; reduced rates of lung disease, obesity, asthma, and other chronic illnesses; more walkable neighborhoods and safer routes for walking and biking; protected natural areas and flourishing farms and ranchlands; and greater access to housing and transportation choices for all communities throughout California.

I was just elected to a record fifth term as City Councilmember in the City of Sacramento. A big part of my reelection platform was to carry out the forward-looking General Plan the City adopted this year. This General Plan accommodates thousands more housing units and jobs in the Central City and transit centers. In fact, two-thirds of all future growth in the City will be in infill areas near existing services such as light rail, schools and jobs. This is expected to lead to greater transit use and greenhouse gas reductions. Furthermore, 85% of the City is located in Transit Priority Areas, as identified in SB 375, meaning that most of our population is close to existing or planned transit stations.

The City has also adopted a Sustainability Master Plan and Sustainability Implementation Plan designed to reduce greenhouse gases from City operations and ensure that the City operates in a sustainable manner. Specific actions include: 1) LEED certification for City facilities; 2) energy conservation retrofit program to reduce energy consumption at City buildings; 3) Solar for City Buildings program that will install solar panels on City buildings to produce up to 5 megawatts of electricity. The City is also participating in the California FIRST Program (AB 811) that creates a special financing district which provides loans to residents to install energy efficiency and solar improvements in their homes.

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I believe other cities in California will follow Sacramento's lead. In 2011, the City will adopt a Climate Action Plan in 2011 that will reduce greenhouse gases both from City operations as well as from City residents. The Climate Action Plan includes a number of programs that address everything from transportation and land use to the use of efficient technology all designed to reduce our carbon footprint. Finally, the City is currently preparing the Greenwise Plan to encourage green industry and technology in the Sacramento region. The plan is designed to create new green jobs and promote the use of sustainable practices here in Sacramento.

As the first, target-setting phase of SB 375 implementation comes to a close, I encourage the Board to finalize the draft greenhouse gas targets proposed in the August 9, 2010 ARB staff report. These achievable targets reflect the best expertise of transportation and planning experts from regions around the state. If anything, they are quite conservative.

I also ask that the ARB commit to providing the ongoing guidance necessary to ensure that SB 375 implementation achieves its goals. Such guidance is necessary to help regions measure progress on the full range of potential benefits, including better air and water quality and more economic opportunity for all our residents.

Finally, I strongly urge the ARB to identify resources for implementing SB 375. Local governments, transportation agencies and redevelopment agencies are key partners in SB 375 implementation, and all face unprecedented financial challenges in the current economic and fiscal climate. Please work to identify and secure resources for these needs, in partnership with state agencies, the Strategic Growth Council and the State Legislature, as well as federal agencies and the national Sustainable Communities Partnership.

I appreciate the time and energy put forth by the Air Resources Board and its staff, and by the many elected officials and regional agencies that have also contributed. If you or your staff have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 808-7003 or scohn@cityofsacramento.org.

Sincerely,



STEVE COHN

City Councilman, City of Sacramento, District 3

Board member, Sacramento Regional Transit, SACOG and Capitol Corridor JPB